UNITED NATIONS

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Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1996/127
19 March 1996

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-second session
Item 10 of the provisional agenda

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

Letter dated 6 August 1995 from the Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights

I have the honour to enclose a copy of my letter sent, upon instruction of my Government, to international humanitarian organizations, concerning Croatia's aggression against the Republic of Serb Krajina, a United Nations Protected Area, and to ask you to kindly have it circulated to all the members of your Commission.

Would you please take all the measures within your competencies, conducive to stopping Croatia's aggression and preventing humanitarian disaster of unprecedented consequences, as well as to protecting basic human rights and freedoms of the Krajina Serbs.

(Signed): Dr. Vladimir Pavicevic
Ambassador

Letter dated 6 August 1995 from the Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Upon direct instruction of my Government, I am addressing you concerning the latest armed aggression perpetrated by Croatia against the Serb people in the Republic of Serb Krajina, which, by its magnitude and arrogance, surpasses all the acts of aggression Croatia has carried out so far. Massive artillery and rocket shelling of all the cities in the Republic of Serb Krajina is proof that one of the main objectives of the aggression has been to inflict substantial casualties among civilians and to expel them from the region where they have lived for centuries.

This is the seventh aggression perpetrated by Croatia against the United Nations Protected Areas (UNPAs) that remains unheeded, thus being conducive to widening of the conflict to unpredictable developments, in its region and beyond it.

Devastation unheard of is under way, coupled with murdering of civilians (women, children and the elderly), along with violations of the international humanitarian law basic principles. The ethnic cleansing of unprecedented magnitude, which has given rise to the fleeing of over 100,000 Serb refugees, is a continuation of the conspicuously genocidal policy pursued towards the Serb people and, in a most drastic manner, it renders justification to the fear shared by the Serb people ever since the Tudjman regime has taken over. The Tudjman regime, like the obnoxious ustashi and fascist regime of A. Pavelic in the past, is having the same objective: extermination and persecution of the Serb people from their centuries-old homesteads, from the territory of Krajina.

Even prior to the latest aggression, some 350,000 people had fled from the territory under Tudjman's control, with those who have tried to remain in their homesteads being harassed in every conceivable way, with their forcible conversion to Catholicism, along with discrimination maintained in all spheres and activities of life (eviction from their homes, dismissal from their jobs, seizure of their possessions), with their fundamental human and civil rights being trampled on to the extreme. During the Croatian aggression against UNPA-West, in May 1995, all the Serb population there were either murdered, wounded or evicted.

Such Croatian war and power politics is the most substantial threat to peace and stability in the Balkans.

Regrettably, everything points to the fact that aggression against the Republic of Serb Krajina is not an act Croatia is perpetrating on its own, but rather, that Croatia enjoys support by its powerful protectors, within their strategy pursued ever since the very beginning of the Yugoslav crisis, directed first of all against the Serb people and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

All this clearly points to a thorough and extensively prepared act of aggression, implying also total cleansing of the Serb-inhabited territories.

The Croat aggression against Krajina is reasserting the practices pursued by certain quarters aimed to increase tensions, toward escalation of military conflicts in Bosnia and Krajina, whenever any palpable prospects for achieving concrete progress for a political settlement are looming. Thus, so far, it was the case when the plans concerning the crisis in the former Bosnia-Herzegovina were undermined, or when progress was being made in trilateral negotiations between Knin and Zagreb, while the same is under way at present, with progress in negotiations between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Contact Group being obstructed.

What we are witnessing at present is no action for regaining lost Croatian territories, but a thought-out act of aggression against ethnically clean Serb territories, with the aim of annexing these territories to Croatia, without a single Serb remaining there. The present armed aggression, perpetrated at the time Geneva negotiations with the Serb party were conducted, with the Serbs expressing their readiness to negotiate a political solution based on the Z-4 Plan, demonstrates that the so-called reintegration of Krajina implies forceful annexation of the territory of Krajina, but without its population.

We must note with distress that the international community is turning a deaf ear, that it fails to take any measures to make it impossible for Croatia to pursue its hideous policy towards the Serbs, with special responsibility to be borne, though, by the Security Council, which has the responsibility for maintaining peace, security and protection of victims of aggression, subject to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, as has been asserted by the Security Council itself in its statements, when underscoring that such actions of Croatia are a threat to international peace and security.

The Security Council must take concrete steps and resolute measures against such criminal and genocidal acts of Croatia. Since the very beginning of the crisis in the territory of the former Yugoslavia, the Security Council has spearheaded its activities and decisions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by imposing upon it, without any justification, sanctions hitherto unrecorded in United Nations history, in terms of their magnitude and weight.

What are the criteria employed at present concerning the open Croatian aggression and its flagrant violation of international humanitarian law? The Security Council is also tolerating the arbitrary involvement of NATO forces on the side of the aggressor, by its shelling of Serb positions (the radar installations).

The United Nations, which guaranteed physical safety and peace to the population of Krajina in 1991 under the Vance Plan, has the greatest responsibility to decisively oppose Croatia and in deterring it from its further aggressive actions.

We see a way out from the present situation in a determined Security Council and the entire international community's condemning Croatia's aggression, its war crimes and ethnic cleansing, and also in a vehement international political action aimed at resuming the negotiation process for

achieving balanced and equitable political solutions, as well as in the withdrawal of the Croatian forces from the United Nations-protected Krajina territories.

Yet, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is of a view that the crisis in the war-ridden territories of the former Yugoslavia can be overcome with success and be of a lasting character if handled in a peaceful way and with political means alone.

In view of the disastrous situation experienced by tens of thousands of innocent civilians, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is expecting most urgent and adequate relief from all international organizations, aimed at preventing a humanitarian disaster of unprecedented magnitude.

In a situation when, due to sudden aggression and deliberate shelling of the civilian population in the major cities and villages, their inhabitants were forced to flee their homesteads without any chance to take any of their basic belongings, it is of paramount importance to take most immediate and efficient action when it comes to their care at the locations where they are at present. The population in jeopardy lacks everything - shelter, food, clothing and medicaments, all the way to meeting their basic hygiene requirements, etc.

In particular, we wish to stress that, in view of the economic hardships the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has been facing and the large numbers of refugees it already shelters, the Government and the citizens of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in spite of their enormous efforts, will not be in a position to help in this humanitarian disaster unless adequate international humanitarian relief is there.

(Signed): Dr. Vladimir Pavicevic
Ambassador